

HOB o'the MILL



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BY

GRACE T. HALLOCK

AUTHOR, "DRAMATIZING CHILD HEALTH"; CO-AUTHOR,
"THE LAND OF HEALTH" AND "HEALTH
HEROES" SERIES

AND

JULIA WADE ABBOT

DIRECTOR OF KINDERGARTENS, PHILADELPHIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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Sing oats and wheat and corn
All of an April morn,
Sing gentle rain to sprout the grain,
Sing sunlight keen to make it green,
Sing rain and sun for growth begun,
Sing oats and wheat and corn
All of an April morn.

Sing oats and wheat and corn
All of a harvest morn,
Sing golden grain on farmer's wain,
Sing hay in mow for horse and cow,
Sing meal in pot for porridge hot,
Sing oats and wheat and corn
All of a harvest morn.



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WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

THE big bowl of hot oatmeal waiting for us at the breakfast table is something more than a pleasant food. It has a long and fascinating history behind it. First it has its own particular history. To produce it oat grains were dropped into the warm, moist earth. They grew first on the food the mother plants had stored up for them, and then when their green leaves poked above the ground, they manufactured their own food with sunlight power. They stored some of this food into the grain. These grains were beat out of the dry oat grass when they were ripe, and taken to the factory where they were made into oatmeal, stored in boxes, and taken to the grocery store. At last they reached the breakfast table.

But that dish of oatmeal has another history besides its own particular one. It has a very ancient lineage reaching back to the days when the people of earth were young. Its story is bound up in the history of grain foods and what they have meant to the human race.



PETER DISCOVERS HOB

Hob o' the Mill

HOB AND PETER

PETER was the son of a miller. He had a great many brothers and sisters and, as his father's house was small, Peter had to sleep in the mill. He didn't mind this at all. The great mill-wheel was turned by running water and Peter loved to lie in his little bed in the cool dark and listen to the water drip-dripping from the wheel until he went fast to sleep. His bed was next to the great room where the bags of oats, corn, and wheat were stored waiting to be ground. The boards between the two rooms were full of great cracks and knot-holes and the wind often blew the fresh clean smell of the grain through them across Peter's face.

Sometimes he could hear a rat stealing the grain. Then he would sit up in bed and bang a shoe against the boards to scare it away.

One night just as he was going to sleep he

thought he heard a rat and he picked up his shoe. But a little squeaky voice crying, "Oh, don't sir, don't sir," made him drop it in surprise. "Who's there?" he called. No one answered. Peter got out of bed and pulled on his shoes. Then he tiptoed to the grain room. There in a bright patch of moonlight on the floor he saw a little man about a foot high holding a rat by the ear. They both stood very still as if they had been frozen there. Peter called from the doorway: "I see you."

"There now," said the little man giving the rat a shake, "see what you've done, you've waked up Master Peter. Come along with you," and he started toward a hole between the bags of grain

"Oh," cried Peter, "Please, Mr., Mr.—"

"Hob o' the Mill, sir."

"Please, Hob o' the Mill, don't go away."

Hob scratched his head, chewed on a wisp of oat straw and slanted his eye up at the moon. "Well," he said, "since it's the full o' the harvest moon, I won't." He gave the rat another shake. "Here you, go!" he commanded, "and if I catch you again stealing the master's grain, I'll pull

out your whiskers." The rat gave a frightened squeak and scuttled off.

"They give me a deal o' trouble by and large, the rats," he said seating himself on a bag of oats. "I'm too easy on 'em."

Peter came in and sat beside him. "Do you live here in the mill?" he asked shyly.

"I moved in a few years after it was built," replied Hob. "I was born in a mill, I was, a good many years back, and it comes natural to me to live in one."

"Are you very old?" asked Peter in surprise. "You don't look so old."

"I don't rightly know how old I am," said Hob. "My people, we are mill people, and have been since there were mills in the world for the grinding of the grain. But others there are who live in the little green hills, the hill folk we call 'em. Before my people took to the mills they were hill folk too. But every man to his trade, say I, and that is what my people said to the other hill folk when they took up the mill trade. Hill or mill, Master Peter, my people remember a deal of things."

"Oh, you know stories?" cried Peter.

"Stories and tales, I know that go back ten thousand years," he chuckled.

"Do tell me one," begged Peter.

Hob squinted up at the moon again, and then he shook his head. "Not tonight. Harvest moon is over top o' the mill. It's time you were asleep." He picked up a handful of grain and sorted out three. "Eat these," he said to Peter, stretching out his hand.

"What are they?" asked Peter.

"Oats and wheat and corn," said Hob, "Eat 'em now when the harvest moon is over top o' the mill if you ever want to see me again."

* * *

"Now what did I get out of bed for?" said Peter out loud. "Oh yes, I heard a rat," and he banged against the boards. Then he lay down and went to sleep in the cool dark.

SONG OF HOB O' THE MILL

What have you farmer, farmer
There in your yellow sack,
What have you for the grinding stones,
Clickety, clickety, clack?

A bag o' grain, my master,
And may I never lack
The good grain for the grinding stones,
Clickety, clickety, clack.

What do you with the grounden meal
When miller gives it back,
Crushed between the grinding stones,
Clickety, clickety, clack?

I take it home to my good wife,
The mother of Nan and Jack,
The grounden meal for porridge fine,
Clickety, clickety, clack.



WIND-IN-THE-GRASS AND QUICK-FOOT

THE FINDING OF THE GRAIN

IT WAS snowing hard. Peter and his sister Nancy were watching the storm from the window of the hay-loft in the barn. They were planning what they'd do when it stopped. They thought they'd build a great cave in a snow bank and make believe that they lived there. As they talked they munched the dry grains which they found here and there in the hay.

Suddenly they both looked up as a faint chuckle went echoing off among the dim rafters. And there sat Hob o' the Mill crosslegged on a beam just above them. He was chewing grains too. "Hello, Hob," called Peter, "I'd forgotten all about you."

"You were meant to," said Hob. He jumped from the beam and landed softly in the hay near the children. Nancy stared at him as if her eyes would pop out of her head. "It's Hob o' the Mill, Nancy," explained Peter. "He lives in the mill and scares away the rats. He knows hundreds of stories. Are you going to tell us one now?" he asked.

"Well," drawled Hob slowly, "Seeing you two sitting here munching the good grain does remind me of a story. It's the oldest one I know too."

Nancy and Peter snuggled down into the warm hay, and then Hob told them this story:

Wind-in-the-Grass and Quickfoot belonged to the tribe of Long Hair. The tribe had many cattle. Wind-in-the-Grass and Quickfoot with the other children in the tribe had to look after them. They had dogs to help them keep the wolves and bears away, and at night they had to drive the cattle to the place where the tribe was camping. As they went with the herd through the great forests to the pasture ground they gathered nuts and berries and little sour apples that were good to roast in the hot ashes.

Wind-in-the-Grass had a beautiful silver fox skin to wear at feasts and Quickfoot had the fur of a black bear. But often in summer they ran around without any clothes on at all. In the warm weather the tribe moved from place to place with the cattle in search of good rich grass and clear springs. But in the winter they stayed

in a place of caves and the cattle ate the dried grasses that the women had stored away in the biggest cave. The people ate meat that the hunters brought in and sometimes, when wild animals were scarce, they killed some of the cattle. They didn't have bread or porridge because they hadn't learned yet that the seeds of certain grasses are good to eat.

In the fire cave, on winter nights, the people of the tribe sat around the blazing wood and the old, old men would tell tales of the time when none of the earth people had any tame animals like dogs or cattle.

The children's favorite play place in the winter was the cave where the dry grasses were stored. One dark day they were lying in the sweet-smelling hay and telling each other what they'd do when they grew up. Quickfoot said he'd be the mightiest hunter the tribe had ever known, and Wind-in-the-Grass was going to make the most beautiful clay pots with little pictures on them of trees and animals. She had brought a little clay pot with her that her mother had made for her. As they talked it began to snow. The flakes were small and hard and

the wind blew them against the cave opening.

"Whee," cried Quickfoot, poking his head outside. "The white feathers are falling from the wings of the cold wind. Let's go to the fire cave."

"No," said Wind-in-the-Grass cuddling down into the dried grass. "It's good here." So Quickfoot lay down beside her and they both watched the whirling snow and listened to the whistle of the wind. It was exciting to be there alone in a great storm. It grew darker and darker. Wind-in-the-Grass was so snug and warm that she closed her eyes. Then Quickfoot closed his. The next moment they were fast asleep.

When they woke up it was dark in the cave, a sort of gray dark, not the black dark of night. "Oh-e-e-e-e," yawned Quickfoot sitting up and rubbing his eyes. He shook Wind-in-the-Grass, "Wake, O sleepy one, it's time to go to the fire cave."

"Oh-e-e-e," yawned Wind-in-the-Grass, "Where are we?"

"In the cave of the grasses," said Quickfoot, "and the light has gone. Come." He scrambled

out of the hay and went toward the cave opening. A great wall of snow filled the hole. Quickfoot rushed at it and tried to dash through, but the wall was too thick. He came back to Wind-in-the-Grass, wet and cold and frightened. "We can't go," said Quickfoot. "The cold wind has blown the cave shut with its feathers."

Wind-in-the-Grass began to cry. "I'm hungry," she sobbed. Quickfoot was hungry too, but he didn't cry. The men of his tribe never let water come into their eyes, and he was almost a man. Instead he began to feel about on the floor of the cave. He had seen dead tree branches there many times and he knew how to make a fire come from sticks. Soon he found what he wanted, two small dry sticks and a handful of leaves. He squatted on the floor away from the great pile of grasses and began rubbing the sticks together. After a long time of rubbing a spark dropped from the lower stick into the dry leaves. Quickfoot lay on his stomach and blew. A tiny flame leaped up, then another and another, until the little pile of leaves was all on fire. Quickfoot brought more dry branches and soon a small fire filled the cave with light and shadows.

"Oh, Wind-in-the-Grass," called Quickfoot, "I have made the fire come." Wind-in-the-Grass poked her head out of the hay. The fire made her feel much happier and she came to sit by Quickfoot. "Give me the pot," said the boy. Wind-in-the-Grass handed it to him. Quickfoot went to the snow wall and filled the pot with snow. "The fire makes water of the wind feathers," he said. "Often have I seen it." He put the pot of snow by the fire and soon he and his sister were sipping warm water, by turns.

Then Quickfoot covered the hot coals of the fire with ashes and he and Wind-in-the-Grass drew their skins about them and burrowed deep in the hay.

Wind-in-the-Grass was awakened by a little rustling sound. She looked at Quickfoot, but no, he was still, as still, and fast asleep. She lay down again. "Rustle, rustle!" Wind-in-the-Grass turned her head, oh so softly, and looked straight into the beady eyes of a gray rat who was nibbling the grain. "Shoo," called Wind-in-the-Grass. The gray rat scampered off.

Wind-in-the-Grass lay down, but she couldn't sleep. She was thinking. And it was much

harder to think in those days than it is now, I can tell you. What Wind-in-the-Grass was thinking is this: "I'm hungry. I would like something to eat. The gray rat was eating. He was eating the grass. The gray rat was hungry." Over and over she thought this. You see she had never eaten grain before, and so she didn't think of it as food except for cattle. Then she reached out her hand and picked up one of the wisps of dry grass. She put it in her mouth, head first, and chewed it. Her teeth crunched little hard grains that tasted good. Then she went to sleep again.

When she woke up she saw Quickfoot blowing up the fire. She remembered eating the grass in the night and so she brought Quickfoot several wisps and held them out to him. "It's good, eat," she said. Quickfoot munched on the grain heads. He soon found out that the little hard nuts, as he called them, were the only parts of the grass that tasted good. He began to pick the grains out of the straw and pile them in a heap on the floor. Wind-in-the-Grass helped him. Then Quickfoot said, "Fire is good for the meat, perhaps for this also." He scooped up the grain and put it in the

pot near the fire. The toasted grains made a fine breakfast for the two hungry children. But the grains were very hard and Quickfoot thought he would pound them with a stone as he pounded nuts to take the shells off. This wasn't a hard thing to think of because you remember that Quickfoot called the grains nuts. The pounded grains made a coarse meal.

The children stayed in the cave for days, kept alive with the melted snow water and the grain. Then just as the wood was beginning to give out, Quickfoot heard a sound coming from outside the cave. It had been so still for so long that the very littlest noise sounded like a very big noise. This sound was like the one that Quickfoot made when he dug snow with the little clay pot. It came nearer and nearer. Then the children heard people talking in little grunts as they do when they're working hard. My, weren't Quickfoot and Wind-in-the-Grass excited! They hopped up and down and shouted, and soon answering shouts reached them through the wall of snow. Then a hand holding a clay bowl appeared through the wall and scooped out a hole. Another hand came through and a bigger hole was

made. Then a head was poked through the hole and it was the head of Oakleaf, the children's mother. She chattered with joy, and made the little clucking noises which stood for speech in those days. You see, she was surprised to see Quickfoot and Wind-in-the-Grass. She knew that when people had been lost in the white feathers before, they had never been seen again. Some of the cattle had come to the fire cave when the white feathers began to fall from the wings of the cold wind, and now she and other members of the tribe were seeking food for them. Without cattle the tribe must all starve to death.

When she and the others were shown the little nuts of the grass and learned that they were good to eat there was more clucking talk. Little did they know, then, that those tiny grains were to change the way of living of people all over the earth. They only knew that one more new food had been found. After that when the women gathered dried grass for the cattle they beat out the grains and gathered them in pots for the people of the tribe.

Then one day long years afterward when Wind-in-the-Grass had grown to be an old, old

woman, a granddaughter of hers made another great discovery. The tribe had learned that the coarse meal made by pounding roasted grain was good sprinkled on meat. White Feather, the granddaughter of Wind-in-the-Grass, left a pot of this meal outside of the cave one day. A rain-storm came up and wet it. White Feather thought it was spoiled so she dumped it out of the pot on to a hot flat stone that happened to be lying near the fire. Later when she came to the fire to cook meat she found a brown cake on the stone. She threw it carelessly down on the dirt floor of the cave. One of her babies who was rolling about on the ground picked up a piece of the broken cake and put it in his mouth. He crowed with joy and reached for another piece. White Feather was watching him. Suddenly she reached down and took the big crumb from the baby's fist and put it in her own mouth. The baby howled, you may be sure, but White Feather didn't pay any attention to him. For the morsel of burned meal, as she thought of it, was good. It was very good. It was delicious. That flat loaf was the first *bread*.

This is the story my people tell about the find-

ing of the grain. It may not have happened thus and so, but thus and so it *might* have happened.

"It's a good story," said Nancy. "What *did* Wind-in-the-Grass and Quickfoot do when they grew up?"

Hob didn't answer. He was grubbing around in the hay. "Here you are," he said at last, holding out a handful of oats and wheat and corn. "It's good, eat."

"You said that just the way Wind-in-the-Grass said it to Quickfoot," said Peter, putting some of the grain into his mouth. Nancy took some too.

* * *

"Why, it's stopped snowing," said Peter shaking the hay out of his hair. "So it has," cried Nancy. "Now we can build the snow cave and make believe live in it."



SOWING THE SEED

THE LAND BETWEEN THE RIVERS

PETER and Nancy were playing by the mill brook. They had studied about Mesopotamia in their geographies that morning and so they were making a little map of it on the ground. Nancy was making the River Tigris and Peter the River Euphrates. First they marked out the rivers with a pointed stick, then they dug them deep with sharp stones. A tiny bend in the brook was the Persian Gulf. When the rivers were deep enough the water from the brook flowed into them. Then the children started leveling off the ground between to make a place where they could build the city of Babylon.

“What’s that you’re making?” called a voice above them. The children turned quickly and saw Hob o’ the Mill standing on the bank chewing on a birch stick. He scrambled down the bank so he could look at it closer.

“It’s a map,” said Peter. “This is the Tigris River, and this one is the Euphrates.”

Hob still looked puzzled. Nancy was mixing

clay with a little water. "I'm going to start building Babylon now," she explained.

"Oh, Babylon!" cried Hob, "I know now, you're making the country between the rivers. That's what we call it. An old country, that! The next oldest story I know comes from that country." He sat down on a great flat rock by the brook and gazed at the rivers with a faraway look in his eyes.

Nancy dropped her wet clay. "You're going to tell it, aren't you?"

"What? Oh yes, yes to be sure. To think of children like you knowing about the two rivers." Nancy and Peter came to sit on the rock by Hob so they could hear better. Then the little man told them this story.

Star and Wolf were the names of a girl and boy who lived a great many years later than little Wind-in-the-Grass and Quickfoot. Their father Strong-arm was chief of the tribe. The people of the tribe moved from place to place with their herds of cattle and flocks of sheep, but each year they stayed a few months in one place. This was because they had learned to scatter the grain on

cleared places and to stay near by until it was ripe enough to cut. On the march the people lived in tents made of the skins of animals, but when they stayed long in one place and couldn't find caves they built huts of stones and thatched them with straw.

Star and Wolf and the other children of the tribe helped their mothers sow the seeds. First they scratched the earth with sharp-pointed sticks. Then they flung the grain, any old way, over the ground from clay pots. Star thought this was the most fun, but Wolf and the other boys liked best to drag the branches of trees over the scattered seeds so that they were covered with dirt and hidden from the birds.

Now it happened one day when the tribe was on the march over great hills that Star and Wolf who had run on ahead came to the top of a ridge. Looking down, they saw a beautiful green plain watered by a river. "Oh—e-e-e," they shouted. They could not know that this lovely valley was to become their future home. They only knew that down below were good pasturage and water and level land for the sowing of grain. So they ran back to tell their father of their wonderful discovery.

For days and days the tribe wandered along beside the river. The cows browsed contentedly in the lush sweet grass. Star and Wolf cut great reeds from the river bank and switched the little beasts when they stayed too long munching in one spot. The children were excited because this was their river. They had seen it first, and now they were in a hurry to find out where it was going. At last, one morning just as the sun was rising, the journey of the tribe came to an end. The river had slipped quietly away into so wide a stretch of water that no land could be seen beyond it. Later the people of the tribe called this the Great Sea of the Rising Sun, because out of it the sun rose every morning.

Thus the journey beside the river ended. Strong-arm thought this would be a good place for the tribe to stay in, a little while. So the people began to look about for stones with which to build huts. But not even a pebble could they find anywhere. Then Strong-arm thought of the tall, thick reeds that grew by the river. "We can make huts of these," he said to the people. With their flint axes all the men, women, and children cut the giant reeds. Strong-arm stuck his reeds

into the ground in the form of a circle. Then he lifted Wolf on his shoulders and said, "Pull the reeds together at the top and tie them with this thong of ox-hide." Slowly and carefully Wolf pulled the end of each reed in toward the center and bound them all together there. The reed framework now had the shape of what we know as an Indian tepee. Then Strong-arm told Star and Wolf to fetch clay from the river bank and this he daubed over the outside of the reed tent. The clay dried quickly in the sun and became very hard. Soon a whole village of these reed and clay huts sprang up on the river bank.

Star and Wolf spent a great deal of time by the river, fishing, treading clams out of the mud with their feet, or just playing. One evening as they were about to go home to their hut Wolf said, "Our river is changing its color." "Yes," replied Star, "it is yellow now like wet clay." In the morning when they woke up it seemed to them that the river was making a louder noise than usual. They ran down to look at it, and Wolf pointed to a great reed which had always stood just at the edge of the high-water mark. It was now in the water. "The river is

growing," cried Star. They ran back to tell their father. He came to look. "I have seen rivers grow before," he said, "when the snows melt on the hills."

But never had Strong-arm seen a river grow like this one did. Every day it rose higher and higher. Soon it crawled over its banks and came creeping, creeping over the plain. And then Strong-arm was frightened. He thought of going back to the hills, but they were far, far away. If the river kept rising the people would die in the water before they could reach high ground. "No," said Strong-arm, to the tribesmen, who ran to him crying, "The hills, the hills!" "We will make a hill here out of clay. Let every man, woman, and child carry clay and heap it into a great mound like the mounds we build over the dead. It may be that the great flood which our fathers' fathers told us of has come again. If that is so the gods have said that we must all die. But it may be that they will us to live, and have given to me this thought to save us from the waters."

Frantically the people heaped up the wet clay until an island grew high above the flooded plain.

At last the water stopped rising. This was an exciting time for Star and Wolf and the other children. They tied reeds together to make rafts and poled about after the cattle. They were almost sorry when the water began to leave the land.

At last the river was safely back between its own banks again, and for all the trouble and worry it had caused the people it left behind a layer of fertile earth which it had brought down from the mountains. This dirt had made the water yellow. Over the rich damp soil the women and children scattered the grain which they had stored away in pots. It grew so fast under the blazing sun that harvest time came more quickly than the people had ever known it to do.

"The grain is ripe; the grain is ripe," shouted Star and Wolf one fine morning.

"Oh—e-e-e, is it now?" said their mother. She left her cooking to go and see, because she couldn't believe it. But ripe it surely was, and soon she and all the other women of the tribe were out cutting it with their sickles. The children carried the cut grain to the threshing floor, a great smooth place tramped out by the men.

When the grain was all cut the tribe had the harvest feast.

Then the men brought the oxen to the smooth place and drove them over the heaped-up grass, so that the seeds came loose from the straw. The straw was stored in a large hut for the cattle, and the grain scooped up and put in great pots of earthenware for the people of the tribe.

The years that Star and Wolf lived in the country between the two rivers were at the very beginning of a wonderful age in the history of that part of the world. It was so easy to grow grain that the people had more time to think and to do interesting things. They noticed that the grass was greenest and grew best by the river. The grain scattered back from the river didn't grow tall and yellowed before the grains were ripe. So the people between the rivers dug little ditches through the fields so that the water could flow to the very edge of the place where the grain was scattered. As time went on they dug great canals to carry the water far into the land so that they had more ground for sowing grain.

They soon noticed that in the summer heat

the wet clay daubed on the reed huts got very hard. So they learned to make the clay into square blocks and let it dry. These blocks were the first sun-dried bricks. With them they build the great cities that grew up to take the place of the little villages of mud huts on the river banks.

They learned how to make marks on clay tablets that stood for the words they spoke and this came to be called writing. The people in the country between the rivers were probably the first people to settle down and form real cities. This is why that country is sometimes called the cradle of civilization. And it was the tilling of the soil and the sowing of the grain that made it so.

All these things happened thousands and thousands of years ago, and the way they happened may be the way my people heard of, or it may have been some other way, but in some way they did happen.

As the story ended a flock of pigeons that had been circling over the children's heads lighted on the ground near them and started pecking up stray grains.

Hob took a handful of oats and wheat and corn from his pocket and threw it to the birds. A few grains fell in the children's laps.

* * *

"Have you finished Babylon?" asked Peter as he planted willow twigs by the Tigris River.

"Why no," said Nancy. "I haven't even started it yet."

SONG OF THE NILE

Who gives the land of Egypt to the hungry sons of
toil?

For sowing of the goodly grain, who gives the fertile
soil?

It is the mighty River Nile that brings the fertile earth
Over the sands of Africa, Africa, Africa,

Down from the purple mountains where its waters
have their birth.

Oh, it has flowed in Egypt throughout dynasties un-
told,

When cities grew beside it wrought in marble and in
gold,

When every grain put in the ground gave back a hun-
dredfold

Within the valley of the Nile, River Nile, River Nile,
Beside the River Nile before the pyramids were old.

And what did all the people do five thousand years ago,
The busy folk of Egypt who went walking to and fro?
The folk who lived in Egypt, why they ploughed the
fertile plain,

And planted it with yellow wheat and harvested the
grain.

They traded with the merchantmen from Babylon to
Spain;

And built the lofty pyramids, pyramids, pyramids,
They built the lofty pyramids in sunshine and in rain.



THE GIFT OF THE NILE

IT HAD rained for two days and the water in the mill brook had risen over the banks. Nancy and Peter sat high and dry on a rock, watching the great mill-wheel turning in the swift water. Their father was grinding oats that day. "Let's go in the mill," said Peter. He loved to be there when the men were grinding. The air was always full of pleasant-smelling dust from the grain and the men moving around in the dim light looked like ghosts. They went up to the hopper where the whole oats were dumped in, and there they found Hob o' the Mill sitting on the top of a pile of bags over in a dark corner. "I thought you'd be in today," he said making room for them. "It's a good day for grinding."

"Yes," answered Peter, "the brook is so full it's running over the banks."

"Just like the Nile, eh, in the summer floods?"

"The Nile," said Nancy with a thoughtful frown. "Oh yes, in the land of Egypt."

"My people tell an old tale of that land, but perhaps you know it already."

"Tell it anyway," said Peter. "We like stories we've heard before best, don't we Nancy?"

Nancy nodded.

This tale, began Hob, is a very old tale. Now the land of Egypt was called in the old days "the gift of the Nile." In June when the snows melt in the hills of Abyssinia the Nile River begins to rise and spread its waters over the land. When the high-water mark is reached the land of Egypt looks like a great lake with the little villages rising above the muddy water. When the water goes from the land in October it leaves behind it a covering of black dirt which makes the soil of Egypt perhaps the richest in the world. In the old days men had only to stir up the muddy fields with a stick and scatter the grain over them to have each kernel give back at the harvest sometimes a hundred grains in return. So the Egyptians didn't have to work very hard for their food. The climate, too, was hot and dry and people could get along with very little shelter and few clothes. So it is no wonder that the first inhabitants grew in number and

began to come together, thus forming great cities and towns.

The story that I know of happened in the time of the Pharaoh, Apepi II, who lived over 3,500 years ago. He was one of the shepherd kings who had conquered Egypt many years before and he had his capital in the city of Zoan. Now it happened one day that a company of desert men came into the city with their camels, bearing spices and myrrh and a precious gum from trees in the mountains of Gilead which men called "balm of Gilead." With them, too, was a slave boy bound to one of the camels by a long thin chain. He had black hair and flashing eyes and he was dressed in a straight tunic of white wool which had become very dusty from his long journey through the desert. He was used to the great limestone hills and green valleys of his native land where the only people that he saw were shepherds wandering with their flocks and herds. So this flat country of the great river filled with people and dotted with cities was very strange to him.

When the desert people came to a stop in the market place the shepherd boy saw hundreds of

dark-skinned men and women laughing, talking, quarreling, and doing things which seemed very odd to him. First he watched a man making pots and bowls by whirling clay on a wheel. Another sitting nearby painted them in gay colors and a boy shoved them, when finished, into an oven. More interesting still were two men who sat opposite each other over a charcoal fire. They were blowing on long pipes till their cheeks puffed out. Beautiful bubbles of glass grew at the ends of the pipes. The men of the desert were already trading their spices and gum for some of the colored bottles and vases which lay on the ground beside the fire. Then the slave boy watched a goldsmith who sat in front of a little shop carving a fine wreath of flowers and leaves on a golden vase. Some women, pleased with the lad's comely face, held up the thin cloths of linen they were embroidering so that he could see the little pictures worked in red and blue and purple wool. But the men whom the slave boy looked at the longest were those who were working on a great bundle of reeds. They were splitting the reeds and then pasting them together to make thin yellow sheets. One of

these men saw the boy watching every move he made and he cried out, "Ho, slave, hast never seen paper made before?"

The lad shook his head.

"Belike, he's a barbarian," said the other man. "From whence comest thou, know-nothing?"

"From the hills of Judea," cried the boy his black eyes flashing. "Know that there I am the well-beloved son of a chief whose cattle and sheep cover the hills as the flies cover yonder honey pots." Here a priest from a nearby temple interrupted the lad. "Peace, peace," he cried. "By the sacred bull, must the priests be kept waiting for paper on which to write the decrees of the gods while you lazy fellows bandy words with every stray slave boy on the market?"

But now an Egyptian soldier came pushing through the crowd of men who called their wares to him from all sides. As he stood talking to a man who sold embroidered stuffs from Babylon, his eye caught sight of the slave boy standing by the desert caravan. He strolled over and felt the boy's arms and legs.

"He will make a good slave," thought the soldier. "He is a spirited boy and strong and

will be good at the plough." But he didn't say this out loud for it would have made the desert men ask too much for the lad. "I will give thee thirty silver rings for him," said the soldier turning to the chief of the desert men, "and that is the price of a full-grown man slave."

"No," said the chief, "thou canst not find such a slave as he in every market. If he were a little cleaner thou wouldst see that he is a very pretty boy. Look at his eyes, as sharp as a desert hawk and see how fair his skin is there where his tunic is torn. He is strong, too, and marched through the desert with us as well as a man."

"No doubt," said the soldier, "but still I think thou wouldst be well paid if I gave thee thirty rings. But since thou thinkest so much of him I will add this other ring to bind the bargain." He held out a little gold ring with a blue stone in it and the chief took it eagerly.

"It is a bargain," he cried, "and thou mayst take the boy now." He was well pleased for he had paid only twenty pieces of silver for the lad.

"I know who he was," cried Nancy jumping up and down in excitement. "I thought so, but now I know. It was Joseph, wasn't it?"

“Joseph it was,” said Hob. “Do you know all the story?”

“Yes, but we like to hear you tell it. What did Joseph do when the captain brought him home?”

First he had a bath, said Hob, going on with the story, and then he was given a short kilt of white linen to wear. He slept in the apartment of the slaves. In the morning the overseer, or steward, of the captain's estate cried to the slaves, “Make ready the seed grain and the oxen, for the land has come forth.” He meant that the floods were going from the land and that patches of earth could be seen. So Joseph and the other slaves went to their master's fields outside the city.

There the oxen were hitched to the ploughs. One slave went ahead plowing the land. After him came Joseph scattering the seed from a basket. Another slave with a plough followed Joseph to cover the seed and last of all came a roller drawn by two oxen yoked abreast. The steward stood by and watched them to see that they did their work well. After the seed was in the ground Joseph was kept busy looking after

the ditches which brought the water from the Nile to the thirsty fields. When the time of harvest came Joseph and the other slaves went to the fields again with sickles of bronze. They cut the yellow grain and bound it into sheaves. Joseph was given charge of the great ox-carts which carried the sheaves to the threshing floor. There oxen tied together abreast were driven slowly around over the grain spread out on the hard flat ground while slaves with wooden forks kept stirring it up. The straw was chopped up into short bits by the hoofs of the oxen. Then slaves called winnowers tossed the trampled grain into the air with wooden forks and the heavy grain fell into a pile and the light straw blown by the wind into another pile.

The grain was put into sacks and taken to the granary. This was a great room with an arched roof. A hole had been made in the top and was reached by steps. Up these Joseph and the other slaves toiled with the sacks of grain which they dumped through the hole. Another opening was made below for taking out the grain as it was needed. The chopped-up straw was used for feeding the cattle or for mixing with

clay to make bricks. When the grain had to be ground for the captain's household for making bread or pastry, it was done in a hand-mill, but some men who had great estates had big mills turned by oxen.

Sometimes Joseph used to go into the great kitchen of his master's house to help the cooks make the bread. The dough was put in great wooden troughs and Joseph and the other helpers tread it with their feet to knead it. Then it was taken out and moulded into cakes or loaves. These were baked on a board before a brazier, or hollow bowl, filled with hot coals. Sometimes when the cooks were too busy to bake bread it was bought from a public bakery.

Joseph did his work so well that soon he was made overseer of his master's house and all that he had. And then the day came when he was sent for by Pharaoh to tell the meaning of two strange dreams. But I see you know all about that!

"Oh yes," cried Nancy, "Pharaoh dreamed that seven fat ears of corn grew on one stalk, and seven thin ears on another and the fat ears ate up the thin ears."

"And then he dreamed that seven fat cows came out of the river," interrupted Peter, "and seven thin cows came out after them and ate them up."

"So then Joseph told Pharaoh that there would be plenty in the land of Egypt for seven years, and afterward there would be famine for seven years," finished Nancy in triumph.

"That's right," said Hob with a smile, "You see, if anything happened to keep the Nile from rising in the summer or if it rose too high then the grain wouldn't grow, and Egypt had a great famine. Pharaoh believed Joseph and made him lord over the land second only to himself. During the seven years of plenty Joseph rode in his chariot over all the country of Egypt. The harvests were so great that the people couldn't use all the grain, and Joseph made them store what was left over in the granaries. Then when the seven years of famine came enough grain had been saved to feed the people for all that time. There was even enough to sell to other countries. You remember that Joseph's brothers came down to buy grain in Egypt, don't you?"

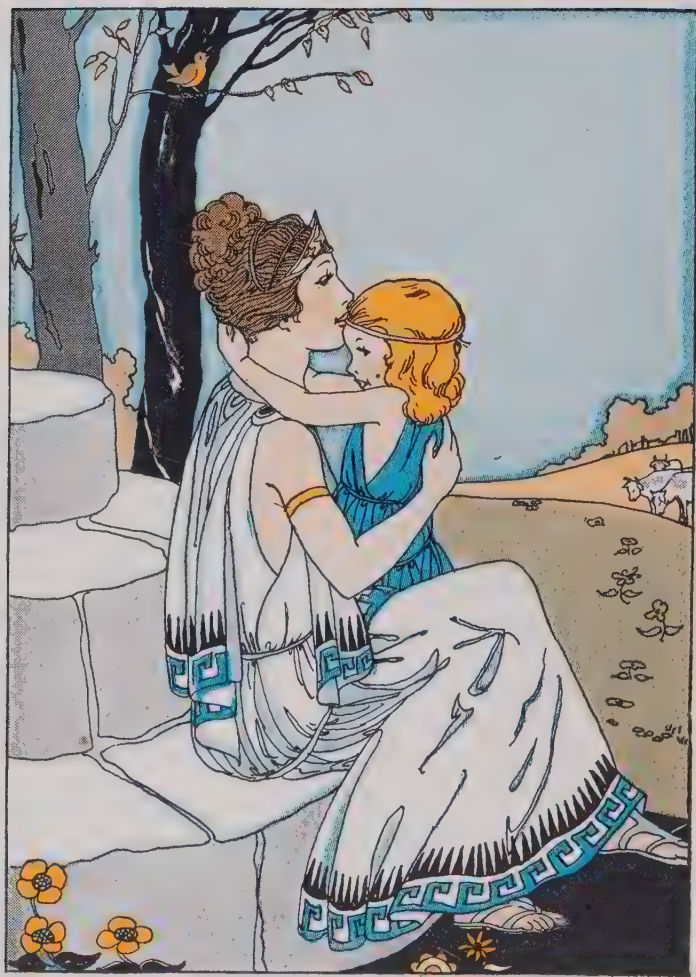
"Oh, yes," said Nancy, "and Pharaoh gave

the brothers and Jacob their father the land of Goshen to live in."

"To be sure," nodded Hob, "for you see the shepherd lad brought to Egypt as a slave had become a great man, and Pharaoh delighted to do things that would please him."

* * *

"Peter, Nancy, time for dinner." It was their father's voice calling up from the place where the men were bagging the ground grain. They started to say good-bye to Hob but he was nowhere to be seen so they scrambled down over sacks of oats and wheat and corn and went to find their father.



CERES AND PROSERPINA

WHEN GREECE WAS YOUNG

LITTLE blades of green were poking up all around the mill where grain had been spilled from the bags. The sun was so hot that Peter and Nancy had gone to sit on the big roofed scales where the hay was weighed. On the board floor Peter had chalked out a circle and was practising his marble game.

"Looks like spring had come at last," said a voice behind them. The children turned and saw Hob standing with his feet apart, mopping his face with a little square of red and white cloth. "Phew," he whistled sitting down by the children, "Apollo is driving his car pretty close to the earth today."

"Who is Apollo?" asked Nancy.

"Why, that's the name the ancient Greeks gave the sun. They thought he was a god and that he drove his golden chariot across the sky from east to west every day. Hey ho, many a pretty tale the people of earth believed, in the days when Greece was young."

"Do you know about when Greece was young?" demanded Nancy.

"Well, now—one story I know that the old Greeks used to play-act every year, so it's no telling how old it is, but it must have come from the days when Greece was young. Shall I tell it?"

"Oh, please," cried Nancy. Peter put away his marbles so that he could listen to this story.

Every September about 2,500 years ago the boys and girls who lived in the little seaside town of Eleusis, just over the hills from Athens, saw a strange sight.

At that time a long procession of men and women marched from the Athenian city along the Sacred Way and reached Eleusis at sunset. They were celebrating the Eleusinian mysteries, the most famous and important religious ceremony of ancient Greece. In the evening the people in the procession went to a brightly lighted hall and there they saw a play made from the story of Ceres and Proserpina.

The story begins with Mother Ceres who took care of the grain all over the earth. She made

the wheat, and corn, and barley, and rye and oats grow, so you can see that she was a very busy person indeed. Mother Ceres had a daughter named Proserpina whom she loved very dearly. One day Proserpina was in the Vale of Enna, a lovely valley in Sicily, gathering roses and lilies, crocuses and violets, hyacinths and daffodils. Suddenly the earth opened in front of her and Pluto, the king of the underworld, came riding through in a golden chariot drawn by four coal-black horses. He asked little Proserpina if she would not like to come with him and see his great palace, all full of beautiful jewels, and gold and silver and other metals that live under the earth.

“Oh no,” cried Proserpina drawing back, for she was very much afraid of the dark cross-looking man.

“Ah, but I need a little girl like you to run up and down stairs in my palace, and to laugh in the dark corners,” said Pluto. “I will give you rubies and pearls and sapphires to play with, and indeed they are much nicer than these common flowers.”

“No, no,” cried Proserpina starting to run

away. Pluto leaped from his chariot and caught her in his arms. "Mother, mother," screamed Proserpina. But her mother was far away making the grain grow in Greece, and she did not hear her daughter's cry. The hoofs of the four black horses rattled over the rocks of the mountains of Sicily. Around the great volcano of Aetna they went and the hot ashes falling on the horses' backs made them gallop faster than ever. "Mother, mother," screamed Proserpina again as the horses sped down through a deep gorge where the rocks soon closed over their heads.

But her cries were all in vain for now she was in the world beneath the earth. Gold and silver and coal lined the walls of the path in crisscross bands. Diamonds and rubies glowed like lamps in the ceiling. And when the palace of Pluto was reached at last, little Proserpina had to cover her eyes, so bright was the shine of the jewels.

"Now, we'll have something to eat," said Pluto as he sent his horses to the stables.

"I don't want anything to eat," sobbed Proserpina. "I want my mother."

“Oh, but you will eat when you see what beautiful cakes and meats I shall give you,” said Pluto. So he sent for his cook and planned a very gorgeous dinner for the little girl. He wanted her to eat, because if she did she would have to stay with him forever and could never go back to the upper world again.

But Proserpina had been taught by her mother to eat only simple food like milk, and brown bread and butter, and oatmeal porridge, and fruits. She had been told that rich foods would be bad for her, so when the table was spread with delicate pastries, and yellow cakes, and great haunches of wild boar and deer, she turned away and began to cry again for her mother. Not a single bite did that little girl eat in all the time she was in the underworld except just once as you shall see.

Now we must see what Mother Ceres did when she missed her daughter. At night she came back to the Vale of Enna, very tired from having to make the grain grow all day. She called to her daughter but no one answered. Then she went to look for her but, of course, she couldn't find her. She called on all the neighbors and

asked if they had seen Proserpina but no one had. One old woman, however, had heard a child scream but she had thought nothing of it at the time. Then Ceres knew that something really terrible had happened to her daughter.

There was one who saw everything that went on in the world. This was Apollo who drove the sun across the heavens every day and so, of course, had a good view of the earth. To him Ceres went for news of her daughter. She found him at the gates of sunset, just stepping out of his golden car. "Yes," said Apollo to the sad mother, "I have seen Proserpina but I'm afraid she is where you can never reach her. King Pluto has taken her in his chariot to the underworld."

Then Ceres was very angry, you may be sure. She forbade the seeds to grow in the earth and she said that the grain would never sprout again until her daughter was brought back to her. She went away to Eleusis in Greece where she made believe she was an old woman. When she saw little children with their mothers the tears came to her eyes, and she told the women never to let their little ones stray out of sight.

Back and forth the oxen drew the ploughs across the fields; the sowers dropped the seed grains in the brown furrows. It was all in vain. Nothing grew. Even the plains about Eleusis which were usually yellow with waving grain were bare. Mankind and animals would all have died of hunger if Jupiter, the king of the gods, had not come to the rescue. When he saw what was happening, he sent Mercury, his messenger, to bring Proserpina back to her mother.

Now all this time Proserpina had eaten nothing. But just before Mercury came for her, Pluto had given her a pomegranate. The wily king of the underworld had found out at last that he could not tempt Proserpina with rich foods, and so he had sent out for some fruit. But the earth was cold and dead, as we know, and all that Pluto's messengers could find was a dry, old pomegranate. Still, when Proserpina saw the fruit her mouth began to water. It was the only food she had seen for a long, long time, that she felt at all like eating. She picked up the fruit and sucked the dried pulp from a few of the seeds. Just at that very moment, in came Mercury to take the little girl back to her mother.

Proserpina heard him say to Pluto, as the two came through the door, "And has she eaten anything since she has been here?" Pluto shook his head sadly. "No, she doesn't seem to like my food," he replied.

"That is well," said Mercury. And then he saw the pomegranate lying on a silver plate, and Proserpina standing near it. "Did you eat any of it, little girl?" asked Mercury.

"Only one tiny bite," said Proserpina, beginning to cry. "I was so hungry."

"Well, never mind," said Mercury. "Jupiter told me that I could take you back to your mother if you had eaten no food here. But since it was such a little bite you will only have to stay with Pluto three months of the year and the other nine months you may spend with your mother. While you are underground Ceres will undoubtedly forbid the earth to bear fruit, but when you return to the sunshine, green grasses and flowers will spring up beneath your feet."

Then Mercury took Proserpina by the hand and led her back to her mother. In her path violets bloomed wherever she set her feet, birds sang in the flowering fruit trees, and little green

spikes poked through the earth in the grain fields. Ceres, sitting by the Maiden's Well in Eleusis, looked up when she heard a blackbird singing. She saw the plains all tender green and the cattle munching in the meadows as if they could never get enough. Then she cried: "Does the earth disobey me? Does it dare to be green, when I have forbidden things to grow until I have my little daughter in my arms again?" At that very moment two little hands stole over her eyes. Then two little arms went round her neck. "Mother, mother, see I have come back again," cried Proserpina. "Are you glad to see me?"

The ancient Greeks acted out this story every year, because it has a wonderful meaning. Proserpina is the grain which lies hidden in the ground after it is sown, just as the little girl in the story stays part of the year underground. The grain sprouts and comes up just as Proserpina comes back each spring to her mother in the upper world. The cold, barren earth in winter is a sign of Ceres' displeasure at the absence of her daughter, and spring is the rejoicing of the whole world at the return of Proserpina.

The Greeks explained many things with

stories, or myths, like this one. The myth of Ceres and Proserpina shows how important the tilling of the soil and the growing of the grain were to the people of long ago.

Just as Hob finished the story Peter pulled up a few spears of young grain at the edge of the scales and nibbled them. A blade or two fell in Nancy's lap.

* * *

"Playing marbles?" cried a neighbor boy from over the fence.

"I was," said Peter slowly, as he drew his pet agate out of his pocket. "Come on over."

SONG OF THE GREEN GRAIN

The bare feet of the green, green grain
Run across the April plain.
Listen to the Robin birds,
They're making such a noise
You'd think those little Robin birds
Were little Robin boys,
Singing to the green, green grain
Running on the April plain.

See the children walk to school
A-sniffing with their noses.
You'd think that on the way to school
They smelled a million roses.
For oh, the lovely springing grain
Runs across the April plain.

See the children run from school,
The sisters and the brothers,
All the children running home
To all the waiting mothers.
Oh *that's* the way the green, green grain
Runs across the April plain.



CHRESIMUS ENTERING ROME

A BOY ON A ROMAN FARM

HEPATICAS were blooming by the mill brook. They looked like little pink and blue stars winking up through the dead leaves. Peter and Nancy were gathering them to put in May-baskets, for the next day would be the first of May.

As Nancy leaned over to pick a lovely blue one a brown hand reached out from behind a tree and picked it first. "Is that you, Hob?" cried Nancy. "I did so want that one." Hob stepped out grinning and gave it to her. "Why, I was picking it for you!" he said. "I don't hang May-baskets, not at my time o' life."

"O Hob, you're not old," protested Nancy.

"Maybe so, and maybe not," replied Hob with a wise smile.

"Tomorrow will be the month of May," sang Nancy. "I'm so glad. Aren't you glad, Hob?"

"Well, yes," said Hob, twinkling his eyes. "The month o' May is a good month. The ancient Romans, now, they loved it too."

"Peter, Peter," called Nancy, "Come, hurry, Hob's going to tell a story."

"It's about a little boy named Marcus who lived on a Roman farm, about 2,300 years ago," said Hob, as Peter came stumbling through the dead leaves, his hands full of flowers. "Speaking of the month of May made me think of him, because he loved it so."

Nancy and Peter sat down on a heap of dry leaves and then Hob told them this story:

In ancient Rome May was the month in which the farmers' fields were blessed, and it made Marcus feel very important to have the great procession from Rome stop at his father's little farm and lay a blessing on the growing grain which he had helped plant. His father had to have ready his best bull, his finest sheep, and his fattest pig for sacrifice to the god Mars, who was supposed to watch over the crops.

On the day before the blessing of the fields Marcus and his two little sisters, and his friends from the city, Lucius and Quintus, all went into the woods to gather flowers. They

came back with great bunches of violets and narcissus, and armfuls of green leaves and ivy. With these they made wreaths which they twined about the animals chosen for sacrifice.

On the next day, when the great crowd of people came to the farm, carrying olive branches and singing songs, the animals were put at the head of the procession. Three times this procession went around the land. At the end of the third round the animals were sacrificed and the father of Marcus made this solemn prayer to Mars: "Father Mars, I pray thee give increase to the fruits, the grain, the vines and the plantations and bring them to a prosperous issue. Keep also in safety the shepherds and their flocks, and give good health and vigor to me, my house and household."

Marcus kept very still during the prayer, but he was glad when it was over and he could run and play with Lucius and Quintus.

The food was on the table when the boys came into the house for the evening meal. Porridge was the main dish. At each place was a slice of black bread, made of barley. Raisins, honey and cheese were set out on wooden platters, and

there were pitchers of milk and wine and a smoking dish of cabbage.

The children kept silence unless the father spoke to them, for Roman boys and girls were modest and obedient. At last the father pushed back his porridge bowl, and then Marcus stood up and said respectfully, "Have I permission to speak, sir?"

"Speak, boy," said the father kindly.

"Sir, Quintus would have me go back to Rome with him for a few days. He has his father's permission to ask me." The boy's voice trembled with eagerness, but he held himself straight and still.

"Well, Marcus," said his father with a twinkle in his eye, "thou hast done passing well this spring, save for the old white ox thou didst let slip into the water-hole. But there, thou hast had teasing a-plenty for that. He may go, mother."

"And the crimson band not yet stitched on his new toga!" cried the mother. "Run along now, boys, and let me work. I'll be glad when all my sons have grown up and may wear the pure white togas of manhood." But she looked

at Marcus as if she were glad in her heart that he was still a little boy.

There wasn't much sleep for the excited lads that night. And early next morning when the dew was still wet on the little green spikes of the young grain, the three set out for Rome. They soon caught sight of the walled city sitting proudly on its seven hills. Within an hour after starting they were within the walls. A great commotion was taking place near the gate by which the boys had entered the city. The streets were filled with farmers all shouting and waving their arms. Quintus pulled the toga of a man who was shouting the loudest, to attract his attention. "What is happening, sir?" he asked.

"Where hast thou been, boy, not to know? To-day is the trial of the freed slave, Chresimus."

"Chresimus?" echoed Marcus. "He was my father's slave! He was a good worker and fairly earned his freedom. Hath he killed a man that you make such ado?"

"No, unless the taking of bread out of other men's mouths be called murder," broke in another man. "By sorcery hath he enticed his neighbors' crops from their fields to swell his

own. Else why should his crops be always good and his neighbors' crops be always bad?"

"Foolishness!" said a Roman merchant. "The neighbors are jealous, that's the meat of this nut. They have accused Chresimus of sorcery just to spite him. They can't bear to see a freed slave outdo them in husbandry."

"That's to be seen!" cried a voice from the crowd. "To the market-place, and let him be tried fairly by the people."

"Aye, to the market-place! 'Tis the hour," cried the mob.

Marcus and his friends were swept along with the crowd to the market-place. There on a little platform Marcus saw the judges. Beside the platform stood two farmers who were to make the accusation of sorcery against Chresimus.

And now a great shouting rose in the market-place. Marcus had to stop his ears. But he joined in the shouting himself when he caught sight of Chresimus. His father's old slave came striding along, looking neither to the right nor left. He wore a faded old work tunic, and his hands and bare feet were stained with soil. Over one burly shoulder he bore a great mattock

with the dirt still clinging to the iron. Behind him marched his slaves, two by two, and husky, well-fed men they looked. Then came the oxen, fat and glossy, drawing ploughs and two-wheel carts. In the carts were heaped all the tools of a well-managed farm. The riff-raff of Rome ran at the cart-tails, laughing and jeering. Marcus heard one boy shout: "He has won a battle over his barnyard fowls, and now he celebrates his victory with a Roman triumph. Hail! Hail! Triumphant one!"

You should have heard the crowd laugh then. A triumph, you know, is what the ancient Romans called the magnificent parades which they held in honor of the generals who had won great victories. Now the cry, "Hail, Triumphant One," was taken up by the mob, and the market-place rang with it.

Never so much as a glance did Chresimus give his tormenters. He marched straight up to face his accusers and his judges. When he heard it read against him that he had called on the dark powers of magic to make his grain grow full and strong and to wither the grain of his neighbors, he turned to the people and spread out his

arms toward his farm tools, his slaves and his oxen. "Behold," he cried, and his voice rang like a trumpet, "these are my implements of magic." Then he held up his hands, all rough and blackened with hard labor. The next instant, before his accusers could dodge out of reach, he lifted them both to the platform and raised their hands high, so that the people could see them. The palms were white and smooth. This was the sort of proof that the people loved. They could see it with their own eyes. The temper of the crowd changed in a twinkling. The men jerked their thumbs in the air as a sign of acquittal to Chresimus, and then they turned on the shame-faced accusers. The street urchins began to pelt them with eggs and old cabbages, and there would have been a riot had not the Roman officers cleared the market-place.

Chresimus jumped down from the platform and began to order his little procession for the homeward march. Marcus went up to him and took his hand. "I knew thou wast innocent," he said. "My father will be proud to hear this news of thee."

"Glad am I to see thee, lad," said Chresimus,

"Carry this message to thy father from me. Tell him that his old slave gives him the honor for this day. For he it was, and his friend Cincinnatus, who taught me when I was a boy in slavery, that good hard labor with the mattock and the plough, early and late, is the only magic that works on a farm. Farewell."

"Farewell, and the gods go with thee," said Marcus.

"Who was Cincinnatus?" asked Peter. "You haven't said anything about him before, Hob."

"He was a Roman farmer who once saved the State," replied Hob. He had a little farm of four acres by the River Tiber, near Rome. One day, dressed in a simple tunic, he was working in his field when he saw some Roman messengers coming toward him. They called, "Put on your toga to hear the words of the Senate." When he had done this, they said, "Know, O Cincinnatus, that you have been appointed dictator." This was the highest honor that could be given to a Roman citizen.

But Cincinnatus loved his little farm more than he loved fame and glory. "Why do you take me from my plough which needs my hands

to guide it?" he asked. "Because, O Cincinnatus," replied one of the messengers, "Rome needs your hands to save the State. The Aequians have defeated the Roman army and have shut it up in a narrow valley. Your name inspires such confidence in all the Romans that with one voice they have asked to march under your orders." Then Cincinnatus said he would go with the messengers if the Republic would cultivate his fields in his absence. He put himself at the head of a new army of soldiers who, like the general, had just left their work and their homesteads to go to the rescue of their fellow-citizens. In sixteen days Cincinnatus had defeated the enemy and saved the army.

The honors of the triumph were given to Cincinnatus who made his entry into Rome in the midst of shouts from all the people. But as soon as the triumph was over, Cincinnatus said he was going to give up the dictatorship, which he had held for only sixteen days. He longed to go back to his little farm where he said he was more needed now than at the head of the Republic. The next day he put on his work clothes and guided the oxen hitched to the plough with

the same hands that had just won battles. The sweet smell of the upturned earth in his little grain fields made him happier than all the pomp and glory he had left behind him.

It is men like Cincinnatus who made Rome great, children.

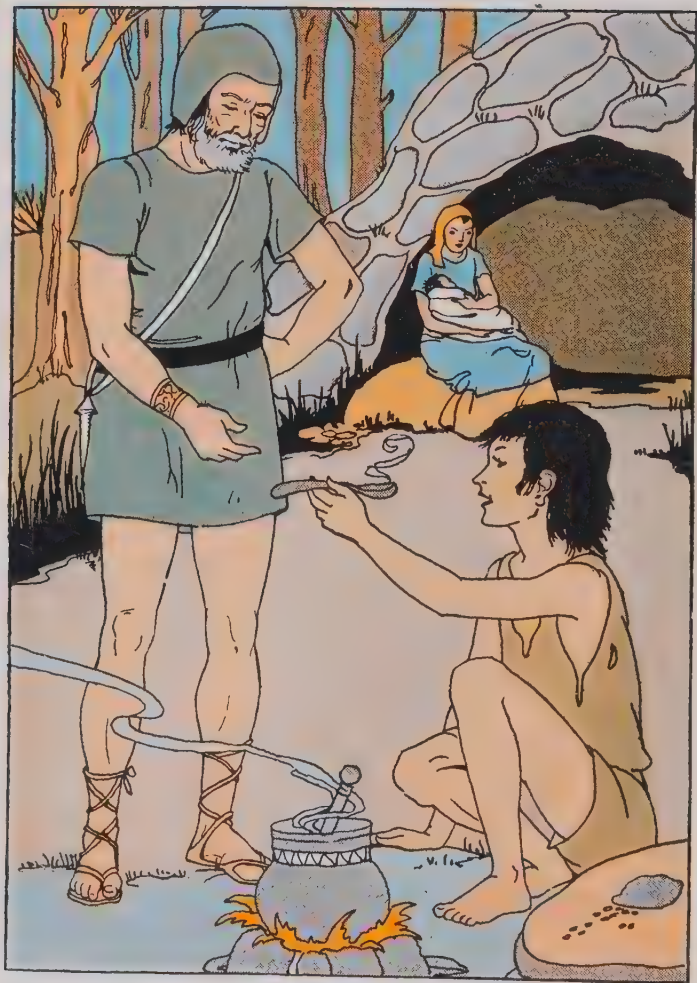
"Oh, Peter," said Nancy suddenly, "you've picked a lot of oat grass with your flowers."

"I thought it looked pretty," replied Peter, picking up the bunch and handing it to her.

* * *

"What do you think looks pretty?" asked Ruth, their older sister, who had come to call them to supper. "Why the green grass in with the flowers," replied Peter.

"Yes, it certainly does," said Ruth. "Come along, supper's on the table."



TASTING THE OATMEAL

OATS IN SCOTLAND

THE children were playing "Roman Soldiers" in the great room at the top of the mill where the bales of hay were stored. Peter marching from one end of the room sang, "Have you any bread and wine, for *we* are the Romans?" Nancy marched toward him from the other end singing, "Yes, we have some bread and wine, for *we* are the English." They had just got to the part where the Romans ask, "Are you ready for a fight," and the English reply, "*Yes*, we're ready for a fight," when Hob nimbly sprang between them from one of the corners.

"Hold," he cried raising his hand.

"Oh, Hob," laughed Nancy, "We're only playing Roman soldiers. Come on, you help me be the English."

"Oh, aye, the English needed help against the Romans, once upon a time. But not now; that's all over."

"Tell us about it," begged the children.

The three sat crosslegged on the floor and

leaned back comfortably against a bale of hay as Hob told this story.

All this happened in the year of our Lord, 84. Domitian was then the Emperor of Rome. The Roman legions under the general Agricola had marched through Britain conquering the people as they went. At last they came to the country of Caledonia which people today call Scotland. Across the narrow neck of land from the Firth of Clyde to the Firth of Forth Agricola built a string of forts, and bottled up the Britons in the north.

These poor men now knew that they must stand together against the Romans. From all sides they came flocking in to join Calgacus, the bravest of all their chieftains. They met the Roman army in the hills. Before the battle Calgacus made a speech to the Britons. Here are some of the things he said: "The hopes of Britain rest on us, her noblest sons. We have lived far away in the North, and our eyes have never looked on slavery. We have been protected to this day by the fame of our arms and by the fact that we live so far away. But now Rome

knows Britain from end to end because her ships have sailed around it. There is no nation beyond us; nothing but waves and rocks. The Romans are before us. If they conquer us our dear sons will have to serve in Roman armies. We will have to give tribute in grain and cattle. We will be slaves in this ancient household of the world. March, then, to battle and think of your forefathers and your children's children." This much of Calgacus' speech my people have passed down from generation to generation. Perhaps you can read it all some day when you've learned Latin in school.

The Britons fought with large swords and small shields. They also had a great many chariots drawn by horses which attacked the Roman cavalry. At first the Britons seemed to be winning the battle, but then their chariots were upset on the rough ground, and men and horses became entangled in the thick ranks of the Roman infantry. The Britons saw that the day was lost but they kept on fighting until night fell. Then they picked up the wounded and fled back into the hills and fens. The Romans didn't dare follow because they didn't know the country.

They couldn't even find the tracks of the fleeing Britons in the great forests and marshes. The Britons left their homes or burned them to the ground and hid themselves far away in caves in the Highlands. The Romans soon left the north country leaving behind only the men in the forts between the Firths of Forth and Clyde. The legions never came back, but the Britons, or the Picts and Scots, as the men in the north of Britain came to be called, thought that at any moment they would see the eagle standards of the Romans carried over the hills. So they didn't dare come out of their hiding places until they felt that they were strong enough to fight again.

Before the Romans came, the Picts and Scots in the Highlands had traded skins and honey for the grain that grew in the Lowlands. But now they couldn't get to the Lowlands because of the Roman forts strung right across the island. The autumn was on them and the winter not far away. Calgacus, who had taken his wife and children to a cave deep in the mountains, was very anxious about his people. Without grain many of the women and children whose husbands had been killed in the battle would

starve. It wouldn't be possible for the men scattered in all directions to kill enough deer to feed so many.

Often the chief men came together to talk things over, but they all shook their heads when Calgacus asked them how they could find grain for the winter. Then one night a young chief named Alric said that in a cave near his old home a strange gray-bearded man lived with a young boy who waited on him. They had been there a long time. The boy never killed any animals and he never went to the Lowlands for grain. Yet he looked well-fed and strong. Perhaps he had found some new food on the mountain that the people didn't know of.

"Fetch him to me," commanded Calgacus. The next day Alric came to the cave of Calgacus dragging a frightened black-haired boy who struggled to get away. Calgacus was angry with Alric. "Why must you be so rough with the lad?" he cried. "See his eyes spit fire. He will tell us nothing now." Alric looked ashamed. "He wouldn't come," he said, "and he doesn't speak our tongue. I couldn't explain." Calgacus spoke to the boy in Latin. "Don't be

afraid," he said kindly, "What is thy name?" "John," said the boy sulkily, digging in the ground with his bare toe.

"John," repeated Calgacus thoughtfully. "It's a name I do not know. Of what country, art thou?"

"Of no country," flamed the boy.

Calgacus was puzzled. "From whence didst thou come here?" he asked at last.

"From the city of Rome."

"Ah, a Roman, then!"

"No!" cried the boy. "Rome I hate, for it took my country from me."

"And what was that country?"

"It is called Judea."

"It is a land I have never heard of. What like country is it?"

"It is like none in the whole world, and there I would be fighting against the Romans, were it not for my grandfather. But he is an old man, and mad, so I must abide with him till he dies."

"Thy grandsire is mad?"

"Yes. He is a follower of Paul, who was a follower of him whom some men call the Messiah of the Jews. For his sins he says he has

hid himself here in these fearful mountains that he may win the kingdom of heaven. And nothing will he eat but grass and water, like the king, Nebuchadnezzar, who was also mad."

"This is a strange tale," said Calgacus. "Thou sayest that he eats naught but grass and water. But what then dost thou eat?"

"That also," replied John, "and honey and milk from a few goats on the mountain which I have tamed."

"It must be a very excellent grass," remarked Calgacus, "to keep thee so well-fed and strong."

"Oh, but it is," cried John, who had lost his fear and seemed glad to have someone to talk to. "It has seeds somewhat like to the seeds of barley and wheat. These I beat out and crush between stones and cook into a porridge with a little salt."

"Wilt thou bring me some of these seeds, and the grasses from which they come? For know, boy, that the men in these highlands are the enemies of the Romans, even as thou art. Our women and children will starve unless we find grain for the winter or something to take its place."

"That will I do," cried John. "And if the

legions come back may I fight against them, too?"

Calgacus shook his head and smiled. "If they come after one winter, no. After two, three, four winters, no. But if they come after the fifth winter, perhaps then thou wilt be ready. Now go, and fetch me the seeds and the grass."

John turned and was off like a little deer of the hills. The next day he was back with a bag full of the strange seeds and a few wisps of yellow grass.

Calgacus looked at the seeds closely. They were small and dark but they seemed to him to be surely some sort of grain. "Prepare them for eating," he said at last. John sat crosslegged on the ground and poured the seeds on a flat rock; then he picked up a round stone and crushed the seeds with it, just as if he were crushing wheat. When he had a coarse meal, he asked the wife of Calgacus for a cooking pot. Into this he dumped the meal with a little salt and some water and set the whole to stew over the fire in front of the cave. From time to time he stirred the mess with a clean stick.

As they waited for the porridge to cook, Cal-

gacus told John tales of the Roman wars in Britain and John told him of the great city of Rome, the most wonderful in the whole world. His grandfather had gone there before John was born. When John's father had been killed in the wars in Judea, his mother had sent him as a little lad to Rome in care of a Phoenician sea captain. She thought that there in the Eternal City he would be safe with his grandfather, and could grow up to be a new leader of his people. But then the grandfather had had this strange idea of worshipping the god of the Christians far away in the wilderness. He had bought passage on a trading ship to the wild country of Britain and many were the adventures that the old man and the little boy had had as they pushed through forests and marshland to the north country.

But now the porridge was done. John borrowed a spoon of beaten tin from the wife of Calgacus, and gave the chief a taste. "It's good," cried Calgacus. "Now, tell me, where does this grass grow and how thickly?"

"It grows over all the cleared places on the hills and in the valleys," said John. "Right now the grass is yellow and the seeds are ripe. At

this time I am wont to cut enough to give me seeds for the whole year, and dry grass for my goats in the winter time."

"Then art thou the savior of my people," cried Calgacus. "For thy service, I make thee a torch-bearer. See, take this fagot and light it in the fire and carry it over the hills to the chief Alric. Bid him send it on to the other clans, with the word that we meet together when the sun goes down on the morrow." John took the torch eagerly and dashed off through the bracken.

Thus it was that the knowledge of the oat grain came to the folk of Scotland, and saved them. From that time to this it has been a food highly thought of in that country.

This is the story that my people tell of the finding of the oats. Part of the tale you may read in your histories, and part is in the legends of my people for they are great story-tellers.

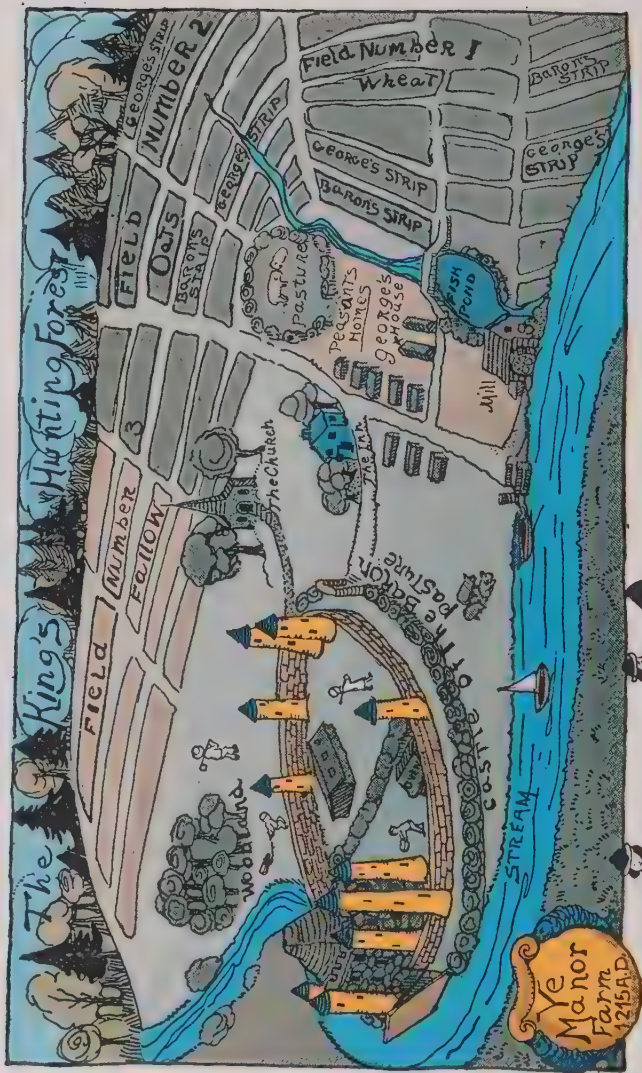
"But you haven't told us half enough," cried Peter. "I want to know more about John, and whether he ever *did* fight against the Romans."

"Yes, and what were the names of Calgacus' children?" broke in Nancy.

"You're both covered with oat straws," remarked Hob without answering.

"Goodness, Peter," said Nancy, "let me brush your coat. It's all full of oat straws."

"Your hair is worse," retorted Peter. "Come on, let's go swimming."



THE GREAT CHARTER

"JUST look at that," said the children's father. He pointed to a young apple tree with the bark chewed off in a complete ring around the trunk near the ground.

"What did it, father?" asked Peter. He and Nancy were walking with their father in the orchard back of the mill.

"A jack rabbit," replied their father. "You can't grow young fruit trees with rabbits around. When they gnaw the bark in a complete circle like that the sap can't rise through the tree and then it dies. I'll have to set a trap. You wait here and I'll go off and get one. We'll see if we can't catch some of these fine fellows, and then maybe we'll have a rabbit pot-pie for dinner."

His back was hardly turned when Hob grinned out at the children from behind an apple tree.

"Ho, ho," he said. "A man can protect his young growing things from pests these days. It's a lot different from a time my people tell about."

"What time was that, Hob?" asked Peter.

"Oh, something like 700 years ago."

"Do you know a story about it?" demanded Nancy.

"Yes, now that I think of it, I do remember a tale my people used to tell."

"Oh, let's sit up in our apple tree while you tell it," cried Nancy. She and Peter and Hob were soon sitting in a comfortable crotch of the tree and then Hob began the story.

The fifteenth day of June, in the year 1215, dawned bright and fair. Through the open door of a little cottage in a manor in Surrey, the pale light slowly crept until it fell upon an enormous feather bed in one corner. A tall man in a blue smock with a mattock over his shoulders came to the door and shouted, "Up, up, lazybones, today we must work the baron's land. If we be late we'll have the bailiff buzzing about our ears." Then it seemed as if the bed had suddenly come to life for from all corners tousled heads poked out. There was a great scrambling for faded smocks and soon six boys and girls were sitting on benches at a great table in the middle of the

dirt floor, still rubbing the sleep out of their eyes. The mother had already been up for an hour or more. Now she lifted a great iron pot from the crane where it hung over the wood fire in the chimney place. Hollows had been cut into the thick oak wood of the table top and into these the mother poured smoking oat porridge from the pot. A chunk of black barley bread was portioned out to each one, and soon wooden spoons were clacking merrily.

“Ho, the swine have smelled out the porridge,” cried Cedric, a little boy with yellow hair, as a pig poked his nose through the door. He made a rush at the great beast, but it upset him and slipped into the room, while all the children shouted with glee and beat their spoons on the table.

Then a flock of hens pecked their way over the threshold and the children threw them crumbs of bread.

“Come, come,” cried George, their father. “Enough of fooling. Hitch the oxen to the plow. Lewin, Cedric, Edwin, Peterkin, do you fetch the hoes and the mattock. Judith, you are a great girl now. Carry a sack of oats to the mill

for grinding, and let not the miller take more than the just measure for the baron's fee. And you, Ailsa," he went on, turning to his oldest child, "let not your mind run on marrying this fellow, Ulwin, for I have not the silver to pay the baron for the privilege this summer. There, there dry your eyes. Perchance I'll have it by next Eastertide. Now help your mother with the bread making. Belike she'll want you to carry the dough to the manor oven for baking, and give but one loaf in ten to the steward." He went out shaking his head, as indeed he might, for the life of a peasant farmer was no easy matter in those days.

The boys had the ox-team ready and George and his sons went off across a wide stretch of pasture land, where the cattle grazed, to the oat field.

A great oak forest, part of the king's own hunting grounds, reached to the very edge of the oat field. George himself held ten acres in this field, ten in a second field sowed with wheat and ten in a third field on which nothing had been planted so that the land could rest. The following year this third field would be sown with bar-

ley and the field now planted with wheat would lie idle. All the cultivated land of the manor lay in these three great fields. Be he peasant or be he the baron, no man held strips of land which lay together in one plot. Each one's holdings were scattered, hit or miss, through the three fields. George often complained of the time he lost walking from one strip to another.

As the three boys reached the strip they were to hoe, they saw a rabbit nibbling the young oat sprouts on one of their father's holdings. They shouted at it and waved their hoes, and it started to double in and out through the field. The boys threw their tools to the ground and gave chase. Cedric picked up a stone and threw it at the little creature. He only meant to frighten it, but "thud," it landed against the rabbit's ribs and bowled it over. George, who had walked more slowly because he was driving the oxen, ran toward the boys waving his arms, and shouting, "Stop, stop!" But he was too late, for a man dressed in forest green and riding a high-stepping horse came thundering over the field caring not a whit that he trampled down the young grain.

"Hold," he cried, "In the name of the king, hold." He sprang from his horse and caught Cedric by the ear. "Fool," he cried, "do you not know that it is death to hurt any of the king's game animals?"

"I was but scaring the beast away from the young grain," muttered Cedric. "That is allowed."

"Ha," cried the keeper of the king's forest, for it was he. "Do you call it 'scaring only' to break a leg? Behold," he pointed to the rabbit which was hobbling off toward the forest. "See, it's as good as dead, for what sport is it to hunt a lame animal?"

"Let the king make a pot-pie of it then," scowled Cedric.

"Ha, insolent?" said the forester. He turned to George who was standing with face as pale as wax. "You know, if this churl doesn't, what penalty the king may take for this."

"I know," muttered George.

"The king is a man of mercy and so I say this foolish boy shall not die, but as a fine for this offence against the king, I shall take your team of oxen and your wain, your mattock and your plough."

"Have mercy, sir," begged George on his knees. "Will you make a common serf of me? How can I hold my land if you take my tools?"

"You should have thought of that ere you bred up a mannerless wolf cub, like this one. Hold your tools ready at nightfall for I send my men to seize them." The forester rode off over the young grain leaving George and his sons in black despair.

"Now, woe is me," cried George. "We are all ruined, for where will I get the silver to buy new oxen and tools?"

"Oh, father, father," sobbed Cedric falling at his feet. "I didn't mean to hurt the rabbit. Truly, I threw the stone to scare him only."

"I know, son," said George sadly. "But now 'tis done, and you and your brothers will grow up to be landless men, for unless I have tools to do the baron's service he will take my land from me."

The four went on with their work, for what else was there to do? At nightfall they walked slowly through the little manor village with its straggling cottages each enclosed by a ditch and a thorn hedge. George stopped at the sign of the

White Pigeon, for a mug of ale and as he was drinking it, a troop of men-at-arms and English archers came clattering into the inn-yard, with pennons flying.

"Ale, ale," cried they, as the inn-keeper came to the door in his white apron.

"Why 'tis the baron's company," cried the inn-keeper. "Hath the baron returned, then, from London town?"

"What is that to you, old red nose? Bring us ale, for the dust lies thick in our gullets."

"We bring news, great news, Gaffer," cried the leader. "Will you give us one free round for the news we bring?"

"What like news is it?" asked the landlord cautiously.

"Great news, the like of which has never been heard in England before. We come from the field of Runnymede where the barons had council with the king."

"What are we to kings and barons," put in George fiercely, "except to be squeezed for silver and to have our chattels taken from us for small offence?"

"Ha," cried the leader. "That's where the

news comes in. Do we drink at the inn's expense, Gaffer?"

"You do," grumbled the inn-keeper. "Ho, Marion, tankards all around for the company." A rosy-cheeked girl came out with a wooden trayful of brimming leather mugs.

"Here's to the freemen of England," cried Samkin, the company leader. "Hurrah," shouted the men. George didn't drink and he didn't shout. He stood beside his sons straining forward with a wild look of hope in his eyes.

Samkin wiped his mouth with his hand. "Now what is this great news?" asked the inn-keeper.

"After the drink, the score. After the score, the payment," said Samkin. "Well, know that this day King John has set his name to a great charter of liberties."

"What has that to do with us?" muttered George. "The great barons, perchance they have made the king give them liberties, but what of us?"

"A clerk who helped write down the charter stood near us on the field where the king signed,"

said Samkin, "and he set it forth to us most clearly. He said it was written in the charter that no free man shall be taken, or imprisoned, or dispossessed of his goods, or outlawed, or exiled, or anyways destroyed, save by the lawful judgment of his equals in rank. Moreover, the tools necessary for a man's livelihood cannot be taken as a fine for an offence."

George leaned forward, his face alight with joy. "Is it so set down?" he cried. "Is it true that the forester of the king cannot take my oxen and my cart, my mattock and my hoe, for that my lad here lamed the king's rabbit with a stone?"

"It is true," said Samkin. "Nay, they can't even put the boy in the stocks for it, save he be judged by honest men of the neighborhood."

"Now hath God blessed England on this day," said George solemnly taking off his hat. "Amen," cried the jolly soldiers in a chorus. "Sing, ho, for merry England," and they tossed up their steel caps—like this, ended Hob, tossing up his red tam o'shanter. A shower of oats and wheat and corn fell out of it into the children's laps.

"Where are you, children?" called their father, "I found the trap."

"Here we are, father, up a tree," sang Nancy.
"We're coming right down to help you set it."



SQUANTO PLANTING CORN

INDIAN CORN

FAT red-breasted Robins were singing in the blossoming apple trees. The earth smelled sweet and fresh when the children stood out in the grass and sniffed. "Time to plant the corn," said Peter's father. "Can we help?" cried Nancy and Peter together. "We'll see," said father, with a twinkle in his eye. This is how it happened that Peter and Nancy walked down the short rows in their father's little garden, that afternoon, dropping six grains of corn to a hill. They both reached the end of their last rows at the same time, and there sat Hob o' the Mill on a tree stump singing:

"One for the blackbird,
One for the crow,
One for the cutworm,
And three for to grow."

"Oh, you know that, too, do you?" said Peter. "Father taught it to us long ago, when we were knee-high to a grasshopper."

"Do I *know* it?" laughed Hob. "Why I was brought up on it, I was. I see you're planting the corn, too, the way Squanto taught the Pilgrims long ago. You've left out the fish, though."

"Who was Squanto?" asked Nancy.

"That's part of the story," replied Hob with a twinkle in his eye.

"Tell it," demanded the children. They seated themselves on the warm dry grass by the tree stump and waited for Hob to begin.

This is a story of the Pilgrims, said Hob, and it begins with a red face peering in at the door of Elder Brewster's cottage in Plymouth on an April evening in 1621. Love and Wrestling, the little sons of the elder, cried, "Hello, Squanto, hast come to take us fishing?"

The Indian nodded gravely. Then he turned to the elder. "Time plant corn!" he said pointing to the little green leaves in the woods near the clearing. "Indian plant corn when oak leaves big as mouse's ear." The elder smiled.

"We make the ground ready now, Squanto," he said. "See the men and children are spading about the cottages. Tomorrow, thou

canst show us how thy people plant the corn."

"Must go fishing first," said Squanto. The elder looked puzzled. "What hath fishing to do with corn planting?" he asked. By this time a crowd of the Pilgrim men and children had gathered about Squanto.

"This land, my home," said Squanto spreading out his arms in a dignified gesture. "This land I know. Many years my people plant corn here till they all die of great sickness. Now land is hungry. Feed land with little fish and Indian corn will grow."

"What nonsense is this?" cried Stephen Hopkins, one of the Pilgrim men. "He speaks of the earth being hungry as if it were alive."

"There, there," said Elder Brewster, "This man, even though he be a poor savage, knows the customs of the country better than we. He hath eaten his bread on this land for thirty years and is like to know better what the land needs than we who have been here for one winter only. Have thy way, Squanto." He waved the Indian toward the little brook that flowed near the settlement. Thus Squanto taught our forefathers one way of fertilizing the land.

A crowd of young people followed the Indian. They were curious to see what he'd do. They thought, too, that they might persuade him to tell them one of the old Indian legends, as he often did when the day's work was over. Squanto was a strange character. He had come to live with the Pilgrims almost as if he were the host and the Pilgrims his guests. Why not? He was the only one left alive of the tribe of Indians who had lived on that very spot until the small-pox had wiped them out. Then he had been captured by an Englishman named Hunt and had lived for a long time in England. He spoke English quite well. Samoset, the first Indian to welcome the Pilgrims, had brought Squanto to the settlement and he had stayed with them ever since.

Now he walked toward the brook with a fine-woven net over his shoulder. He lowered the net into the water and drew it up again and again, full of herrings. When he had a peck or so in the basket by his side, he put the net down and turned to the children who had been watching him eagerly.

"Plenty fish for Mondawmin," he said smiling.

"Oh, Squanto, who is Mondawmin?" cried Mary Chilton, a blue-eyed girl of fifteen.

"Mondawmin, Indian corn. You like story of Mondawmin?"

"Yes, yes," cried all the children. Love and Wrestling pressed close to the Indian's side as he sat down on a stone by the brook and told the story of how the Great Spirit gave the Indians the good corn. This is the story Squanto told:

Once a poor Indian lived far away where the sun sets. He loved the Great Spirit and prayed to him often. But he wasn't a very good hunter and often his family didn't have enough to eat. His oldest son often wished he could help his father but he hadn't yet come to manhood. At last the time came for the fast which every Indian boy must undertake. During this fast the spirit who will guard the boy through life is supposed to appear to him.

A lodge of logs and birch-bark was built for the boy deep in the forest, when the little green leaves came on the trees. There he was to stay without food of any kind for seven days. On the first day he wandered through the forest and saw all the animals and the birds that lived in the wood. Then he prayed to the Great Spirit,

"Master of Life, must our lives depend on the flesh of the wood?"

On the second day, he walked by the river's bank and saw the wild berries and grapes which grew in the meadows. "Master of Life," he cried, "must our lives depend on the wild fruit of the meadow?"

On the third day he walked by the lake and saw all the fish in the still waters. "Master of Life," he prayed, "must our lives depend on the fish of the water?"

On the fourth day, he lay in his lodge very weak from want of food, and thought of how hard it was for the Indians to live when they had to depend on hunting and fishing and on finding the wild fruit of the clearings. He wished he could discover some way of making the Indian's life easier.

As he dreamed of this and that, he saw coming toward him from the sky a beautiful young man. He was dressed in garments of green and yellow and over his forehead drooped waving plumes. The young man drew near the boy's couch and said: "My friend, the Great Spirit has heard your prayers and your thoughts for the good of your people. I have been sent to tell you how you

may gain that for which you pray. Rise now and wrestle with me."

The boy knew he was weak from fasting but he felt courage growing in his heart. So he rose from his couch and wrestled with the stranger. He was almost exhausted when the young man said: "It is enough for once. I will come again tomorrow at sunset." Then he vanished in the sky. The next day he came once more. Although the boy was weaker than ever he felt strength come to his limbs as he wrestled. "Enough," cried the stranger. "Tomorrow I come again for the third trial." The next night the poor lad was so faint he could hardly stand, but his heart was full of courage. As he wrestled, new strength came to his body and at last the young man said he was conquered.

The two entered the lodge and sat on the couch. "The Great Spirit will now grant your prayer because you have wrestled so manfully," said the stranger. "Tomorrow is the seventh day of your fasting. At sunset I will wrestle with you for the last time and you will overcome me. Then you must strip my green and yellow garments from me, and lay me in the earth. Scatter

the soil lightly over me and let no worms or greedy birds come to disturb me. You must come to sit beside my grave every day until at last I come springing up to the sunlight."

With these words the stranger went back to the Great Spirit. On the next day, which was the seventh day of the boy's fasting, his father came with food. "Eat, my son that you may not die of hunger," begged the old man. But the boy would not eat. He bade his father leave him, and waited patiently for the setting of the sun.

At last the sun slipped down over the edge of the world and the purple twilight came flooding through the new leaves of the forest. Then the young man appeared, beautiful in his garments of yellow and green. The two wrestled together silently, until the stranger was thrown to the ground, dead. The boy stripped his garments from him and laid him tenderly in the earth. Over the body he lightly sprinkled the moist soil as he had been told to do. Then the boy broke his fast with the good food his father had left.

He returned to his father's lodge but he did not forget his angelic friend. He tended the grave carefully and one day as he sat beside it

he saw a green plume pushing up through the earth. Each day it grew higher and higher until at last a tall and graceful plant stood on the grave in all its green and shining glory. "It is my friend," cried the boy. "It is *Mondawmin*, the friend of all mankind."

Then he called his father. Pointing to the plant he said: "See, my father, this is what has come of my fasting. Now we need no longer depend on hunting and fishing and wild fruit for our food."

Later when the autumn changed the green leaves to yellow the boy pulled an ear from the plant with kernels hard and yellow. He told the Indians what the stranger had revealed to him in his visions in the forest. The husks must be torn from the ears as he had torn the stranger's garments in wrestling. Then the ears must be held to the fire to brown. After that they were good for eating. Some of the ears must be buried in the ground in the springtime as he had buried *Mondawmin* after he had overthrown him. Thus came the gift of corn to the Indians.

This is the story that Squanto told in his broken English to the Pilgrim children on a

spring evening long ago. Later a great American poet called Longfellow told it in a beautiful poem about Indians called, "The Song of Hiawatha."

The next day Squanto showed the Pilgrim children how the Indians plant corn. First he made a hole four inches deep with his hoe. Then he threw four or five kernels of corn in the hole with one of the herrings, and covered them lightly with earth in the form of a little hill. About a span distant from the first hole, he made another, and sowed the corn in the same fashion. In this way he planted all the Indian corn.

The Pilgrims also planted barley. When fall came they had a good crop of corn and barley and they were so thankful that they celebrated the harvest with a week's festival of Thanksgiving. Massasoit, the Indian chief, was invited, with ninety of his braves. He helped supply meat for the feast by sending his hunters into the forest for deer. They came back with five deer. The Pilgrim men shot wild turkeys enough to last for the whole week, and gathered clams and oysters from the beach. Oh, there was fine feasting that week, I can tell you, and all in honor of the good grain, enough to last

through the cold hard New England winter. That was the first Thanksgiving.

A crow lit on the ground near the children and looked at them knowingly. "Scat," cried Peter and Nancy together, and they flung grains of corn at him to scare him away.

* * *

"That's no way to scare off crows," said their father coming up behind them. "Grain is too precious to be thrown away. What you need is a handful of pebbles." But the crow had already taken himself off. Crows are wise birds.

SONG OF THE FARMER

First came the hunter, who hunted the deer
With clubs and with stones, and with flint-pointed
spear,

Who hunted the mammoth, who hunted the bear,
Who lived in a cave, like a fox in his lair.

Then came the shepherd, who tamed the wild cows,
And found for them places to drink and to browse,
Who cut for them grasses of barley and wheat,
And beat out the grain for his children to eat.

Then came the farmer who ploughed up the ground
With the sharp-pointed branch of a tree he had found;
Who called out his children to scatter the grain,
And who watched it spring up in the sunlight and rain.

Now the hunter he wandered all over the earth
And never remembered the place of his birth,
And the shepherd he followed his cows and his sheep
And his home was the place where he lay down to sleep.

But the farmer he gave up his wandering life
And made a real home for his children and wife,
For the grain it stands fast where it starts in to grow,
And the men who would reap it, must stay where they
sow.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS OF THE SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICE

GRAIN THROUGH THE AGES

An historical account of the growing, milling, and uses of grains through the centuries—by Grace T. Hallock and Thomas D. Wood, M.D. For junior high school students.

CARRYING GRAIN IN ANCIENT TIMES

A poster 20x27 inches, illustrating an epoch in the history of grains.

UNCLE SAM'S FARM

A map project, to aid in teaching the sources of America's farm produce in the fifth, sixth and seventh grades. Cutting and pasting as well as careful study are involved.

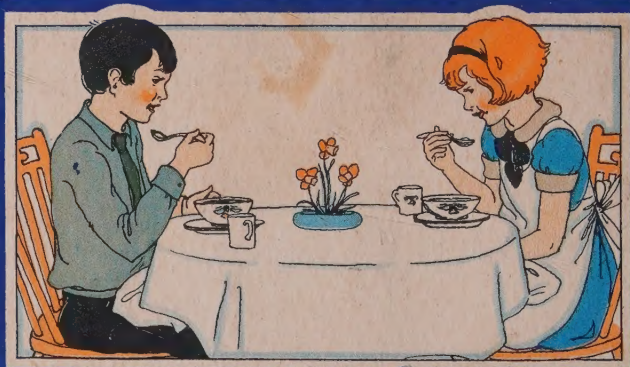
The publications are sent free to educators requesting them, the method of distribution varying with the type of material and local requirements.

THE QUAKER OATS COMPANY

School Health Service

80 East Jackson Street

Chicago, Illinois



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